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**TO: Economic Support Supervisors
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Job Center Leads and Managers**

**FROM: Amy Mendel-Clemens
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BEM/DWS OPERATIONS MEMO

No: 05-35

DATE: 09/15/2005

FS	<input type="checkbox"/>	MA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SC	<input type="checkbox"/>
CTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	CC	<input type="checkbox"/>	W-2	<input type="checkbox"/>
FSET	<input type="checkbox"/>	EA	<input type="checkbox"/>	CF	<input type="checkbox"/>
JAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	JC	<input type="checkbox"/>	RAP	<input type="checkbox"/>
WIA	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	EP	<input type="checkbox"/>	★

PRIORITY: HIGH

**SUBJECT: Temporary Disability Determination Process for Hurricane Katrina
Evacuees**

CROSS REFERENCE: Medicaid Eligibility Handbook Ch. 3.6.8.5.3
FoodShare Handbook Ch. 4.3.4.2

EFFECTIVE DATE: September 9, 2005

PURPOSE

This memo communicates the procedures that must be implemented for Hurricane Katrina Evacuees claiming an urgent medical need or impairment.

BACKGROUND

The regular disability determination process can take up to 50 to 90 days to complete and Medicaid (MA) eligibility is normally pended until that determination is made by the Disability Determination Bureau (DDB). The destruction of medical facilities and communication systems caused by Hurricane Katrina will make it impossible for many evacuees to obtain medical records needed for DDB to process regular disability determinations. The need to schedule medical examinations for these persons would further delay DDB's disability determination. For MA eligible evacuees in need of medical care, that process will take too long to allow them the immediate access they need to Wisconsin MA providers. We have decided to

expedite MA eligibility determinations for persons with disabilities using the presumptive disability (PD) determination process.

TEMPORARY POLICY CHANGE

Current presumptive disability requires that the individual have an urgent medical need and have a high likelihood of being determined disabled by DDB. Hurricane Katrina evacuees will be considered to have an urgent need based on their Hurricane Katrina evacuee status. In addition, DDB and Bureau of Eligibility Management have agreed to use the following expedited process for evacuees who may potentially be considered disabled, were not receiving Social Security Disability (SSDI) or SSI benefits in their home states and **would be eligible for MA once the disability has been determined**. This policy change and the associated process are temporary and will remain in effect until further notice from this Department.

PROCEDURE

For Hurricane Katrina evacuees from the designated disaster areas (per Ops Memo 05-33), who would only be eligible for MA if they are disabled, Income Maintenance (IM) workers are to follow this process:

1. Verify, when possible, whether the applicant was previously determined disabled by Social Security. Workers should use SOLQ, WTPY, BENDEX, a current SSI or SSDI award notice, or a MA card indicating blindness or disability.
2. If the applicant was not previously determined disabled or an SSN (or other documentation) is unavailable for use to verify disability status, use the following expedited Presumptive Disability (PD) determination process.
3. Any evacuee from Hurricane Katrina is considered to have an urgent need. Accept a self declaration from the applicant that he or she is an evacuee from the affected areas. No medical professional will have to attest to this urgent need. Document the client's attestation that s/he is a Katrina evacuee. This is done by having the applicant complete and sign the Hurricane Katrina Evacuee Information form (HCF10170). See Operations Memo 05-33 for this form.
4. Have the applicant fill out the Medicaid Disability Application form (HCF10112) and **two** signed copies of the Confidential Information Release Authorization form (HCF14014).
5. Once these three forms have been completed, **call DDB at (608) 266-3754**. This number is a hotline established to handle Katrina evacuees. The hotline will be in operation during the following hours:

Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

6. Callers will be connected to a Disability Specialist who will ask the IM worker questions concerning the applicant and immediately inform the worker if the person can be certified for a presumptive disability.
7. Document the telephone contact with DDB in CARES, providing the date and time the telephone contact was made.

8. For applications being processed outside of the hotline hours, follow the regular PD process of faxing the forms along with the Request for Medicaid Presumptive Disability Decision form (HCF10125). On this form, below the section of the Request form that indicates the urgent need, write in that this person is a Hurricane Katrina evacuee. **The DDB FAX number to be used for the evacuees is (608) 267-9874.** DDB will respond to these requests the following business day (or same business day if the FAX comes in before 8:00 AM).
9. In addition to making these determinations, immediately refer these evacuees to the local Social Security Administration (SSA) offices in WI for consideration of a formal disability determination and other potential benefits (e.g., survivor claim, SSI or SSDI, etc.) A list of SSA contacts has been provided for the use of IM agency staff only. **Do not provide these numbers to the applicants or their representatives.** Make the call to the SSA contact at the time of the application for MA.
10. Send the completed Medicaid Disability Application (HCF10112) and **two** signed copies of the Confidential Information Release Authorization forms (HCF14014) along with a copy of the Hurricane Katrina Evacuee Information form to DDB (HCF10170) by fax or mail the same day.

As with other presumptive disability cases, PD MA begins the date on which the presumptive disability finding is made by DDB or the IM worker. The presumptive determination shall remain in effect until the IM agency is notified that DDB has denied or approved the disability claim. Follow the process in the Medicaid Eligibility Handbook Ch. 3.6.8.5.3, if the disability claim is denied.

POLICY REMINDER

Disaster payments

Major disaster and emergency assistance payments made by federal, state, county, and local agencies, and other disaster assistance organizations, are disregarded as income and assets for FoodShare and all programs of MA. (MEH 4.1.2.4) (FSHB 4.3.4.2)

CONTACTS

BEM CARES Information & Problem Resolution Center

★Program Categories – FS – FoodShare, MA – Medicaid, SC – Senior Care, CTS – Caretaker Supplement, CC – Child Care, W-2 – Wisconsin Works, FSET – Food Stamp Employment and Training, CF – Children First, EA – Emergency Assistance, JAL – Job Access Loan, JC – Job Center Programs, RAP – Refugee Assistance Program, WIA – Workforce Investment Act, Other EP – Other Employment Programs.

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